

**In Re Investigation of Head-end Collision
on the St. Louis & San Francisco Rail-
road, at Mansfield, Ark., May 5,
1914, Resulting in the Death
of Two Employees.**

On May 5, 1914, there was a head-end collision between a freight train of the St. Louis & San Francisco Railroad and a light engine of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railway at Mansfield, Ark., resulting in the death of 2 employees.

After investigation of this accident the Chief Inspector of Safety Appliances reports as follows:

Extra 613 of the St. Louis & San Francisco Railroad, hauled by locomotive 613, was in charge of Conductor Matthews and Engineman Campbell, and on the day of the accident arrived at Mansfield at 3:30 p.m. While locomotive 613 with the caboose behind it, and an automobile car in front of it, was switching at Mansfield, it collided with Rock Island locomotive 1703 at about 4:00 p.m., while running at a speed of 6 or 8 miles per hour.

Train 81 of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railway was a local freight running between Booneville, Ark. and Haileyville, Okla., hauled by locomotive 1703, and was in charge of Conductor Snyder and Engineman Shields. On the day of the accident this train arrived at Mansfield at 3:55 p.m.; the locomotive was cut off from the rest of the train and proceeded on the track that is used by the Frisco trains in reaching the station, to pick up a car of brick, and collided with extra 613 while running at a speed said to have

been 3 or 4 miles per hour.

The collision occurred 360 feet east of the east end of the station platform and 100 feet in on a reverse curve, 409 feet in length, on practically level track. Locomotive 613 and the furniture car were slightly damaged. The two brakemen riding on the front end of locomotive 613 were killed. The weather at the time was clear.

The view of the engineman of extra 613 was obstructed by the car ahead of locomotive 613 and also on account of his being on the outside of the curve. The view of the fireman was but 125 feet on account of trees on the inside of the curve. The view of the engineman of locomotive 1703 was 240 feet, while the view of the fireman was entirely obstructed on account of being on the outside of the curve.

Mansfield is the terminus of the Mansfield Division of the Frisco Lines, and is an interchange point with the Rock Island Lines. This yard is operated under a joint contract, both roads using any and all the tracks within yard limits, there being regular designated tracks for delivering cars to both lines. However, each road has a separate track for entrance to the station, but it appeared to be customary for the Rock Island to use the track assigned to the Frisco trains while switching in this yard.

Conductor Matthews of extra 613 stated that after they had finished their regular station work locomotive 613 left the station for the purpose of switching in the yards, and was proceeding eastward, pushing the automobile car ahead of the engine. After proceeding a few car lengths Conductor

Matthews, who was riding in the caboose, heard someone call. He then saw locomotive 1703 about 30 feet ahead, at which time he jumped off and started running toward the head end of his train. About the time he jumped he heard locomotive 1703 whistle, and the collision occurred a few seconds later. He had had no previous notice that locomotive 1703 was occupying the track his train was using, and while Mansfield is a joint yard, he did not think the Rock Island had any right to use the track his train was occupying, nor did he remember ever seeing a Rock Island train on that track. He further stated that after his train backed in on the track upon which this accident occurred the main line switch showed red, indicating that this track was occupied. He did not know whether or not anyone was riding on the front end of the car being pushed by locomotive 613, but even if there had been he said it would have been impossible to have seen the approach of locomotive 1703 on account of the trees. He said that the speed of his train was from 5 to 7 miles per hour, but did not know whether or not locomotive 1703 was moving when he saw it.

Engineman Campbell of extra 613 stated that the only warning he had of the approach of locomotive 1703 was a short blast of the whistle a short time before the collision occurred. On account of being on the outside of the curve and the car in front of his engine his view ahead was obstructed.

Conductor Snyder of train 81 stated that when his train arrived at Mansfield they were instructed to pick up a car of brick from the Frisco transfer. Locomotive 1703 was

cut off from the rest of the train and moved in on the transfer to get the car while he went to the telegraph office. He then heard a short blast of the whistle, followed by a crash, but did not see the collision. Although locomotive 1703 was using the tracks used by the Frisco passenger trains, he made no inquiries to ascertain whether all Frisco passenger trains due at that time had arrived, because he considered this piece of track a joint track for switching purposes. He stated, however, that they were required to keep this track clear in order that the Frisco freight and passenger trains might reach the depot platform.

Engineman Shields of train 81 stated that when locomotive 1703 was being cut off from that train he saw steam near the depot, indicating to him that a Frisco train was there. He then proceeded on the track assigned to the Frisco trains, a brakeman walking ahead to locate the car they were to pick up and at the same time looking out for other trains. Engineman Shields said he followed the brakeman, keeping a lookout for Frisco trains, and when he reached a point near the crossing saw the Frisco train moving toward him. He then sounded the whistle for the train to stop, and applied the air-brakes, stopping about four or five car lengths from that train. He then reversed his engine and released the air brakes, but before locomotive 1703 could get in the back motion the collision occurred. He further stated that when using this piece of track they always flag and keep a lookout for Frisco trains, and the brakeman who walked ahead of locomotive 1703

on the day of the accident was to furnish such protection, although he was not provided with a red flag, as required by the rules.

Fireman Hinchlee of train 81 stated that locomotive 1703 had stopped before the collision occurred.

Brakeman Cully of train 81 stated that he was riding on the gangway of locomotive 1703, and when they reached the switch leading to the track occupied by the Frisco train it was lined up for a movement to that track, indicating that that track was occupied. After proceeding a short way on that track he saw the train at the depot unloading freight, and Brakeman Johnson, who was walking ahead of locomotive 1703, give him the signal to proceed. He stated, however, that Brakeman Johnson was not flagging.

Brakeman Johnson of train 81 stated that on the day of the accident he walked ahead of locomotive 1703 as it proceeded on the track assigned to the Frisco trains, his purpose being to locate the car they were to pick up. When he had proceeded about 15 car lengths from the switch, he saw extra 613, but thought they were switching a car in on the short connection. He did not give them any stop signals because he saw no one on that train. He stepped off the track and locomotive 1703 passed him at a speed of 5 or 6 miles per hour. At the time of the accident locomotive 1703 was not moving. When he gave the engineman of locomotive 1703 the signal to proceed he thought they would have time to get their car before extra 613 moved. He stated that they had frequently made similar

movements on this track and it was his understanding that each train was to look out for itself.

This accident was caused by these crews failing properly to protect their trains while switching in the yard.

Before entering upon the track assigned to Frisco trains the Rock Island crew knew positively from the steam and smoke rising near the station that the track they were using was occupied by a Frisco train, and they did not use due diligence and caution under the circumstances, especially in view of the fact that they knew their view would be more or less obstructed by reason of the curve and the trees along the track.

The crew of extra 613 were pushing an automobile car in front of the locomotive without a flagman on the front end of that car. They knew that their view would be obstructed by that car and by the curve and trees, and since they knew that the track upon which they were moving was also used by Rock Island engines they were negligent in not taking such precautions as the circumstances would seem to warrant.

All the employees involved in this accident were experienced men and familiar with the yards at Mansfield, having been employed for several years on trains running into that station, with the exception of Brakeman Cully, who had been employed for about one year, this being his first trip into these yards.